641 as part of the family.

641 2. When a Moaga emigrates and settles permanently in a for-
641 eign country, either to take up trading or to study the precepts of
167 Islam. He is forced to abandon his usual customs and to scorn ancestral ways, thus losing his personal status. If he wishes to embrace Islam, he changes his name, and if he should return to his native village, he would no longer try to be identified as a Moaga, whose customs and beliefs he no longer shares and whom he now regards as an inferior.

641 [188] As has been noted, the Moaga woman who marries a foreigner or the foreign woman who marries a Moaga subject retains her own nationality. Thus, marriage does not involve any loss of nationality. Customs may have been modified, but it is certain that even a Moaga woman who had lived abroad for a long time would soon resume the customs and practices of her own country. The same may be said of a foreign woman who might divorce her Moaga husband and return to her own land.

Naturalization. Since naturalization is unknown, children born in Mossi country of a foreign father and either a Moaga or a foreign mother remain foreign. Furthermore, since children take their father's nationality, a divorce will not affect their status.

II. Birth

842 Conception. The natives have no very well-defined idea of the
776 process of conception. In their minds, the primary cause is God (Wenam), Master of Heaven and Earth, who gives children. It seems, however, that Wendé or Wenam forces the kinkirsi (spirits) to change into a human egg when the sperm is transmitted at the time of ejaculation.

The kinkirsi are invisible beings said to resemble small children and who live near certain houses or [189] groves. Only a few favored persons can see them.

In the same connection, it is believed that ancestors or certain deceased relatives are reincarnated.

843 Pregnancy. It is known that complete cessation of menstruation and the development and darkening of the breasts are the signs of

433 made do with what his own village could produce, and there was
178 really no trade in the ordinary sense of the word. The Moaga, essentially a stay-at-home, depended on the soil for food and clothing.

241 Only two new crops have been added since the coming of the
177 French: yams (na-niouyan, "chiefs' yams") and white potatoes. The recent increase in the cultivation of cotton makes it easier for the natives to meet their tax, and this encourages them to grow even more.

178 The French occupation has brought many benefits in its wake (creation of a network of roads, peace and the resulting free circulation among the villages, and suppression of banditry and looting), but it has also given the Moaga a desire to leave the country.

● 167 The extensive recruitment of [249] laborers for the needs of
464 other colonies in the area, for work on the roads, and for the now obligatory military service -- all of which are accepted reluctantly by the Mossi -- has caused many young men to emigrate.

Some of them set out, for the Gold Coast preferably, without the slightest means of support. They go to work in the English colony in order to earn money for clothes. Since they had no money when they started out, they remain there for months or even years, and this seriously diminishes the agricultural labor force at home. It also forces their old and helpless relatives to cultivate their fields alone.

Besides, so many of them never return!

The Native Diet

262 Sagbo (millet mush) is the principal item in the Mossi diet at all social levels. Rice, regarded as a luxury food, is eaten by the
[435] naba and notables. It costs from two and a half to three francs a kilogram at Ouagadougou and is therefore too expensive for most people. It may be added that it rarely is found in the diet of civil service employees.

264 Mossi chiefs usually have two main meals a day: a [250] first meal of sagbo or rice at around nine in the morning, and a second

When a master wants one of the sheep or beeves belonging to his bagaré, the latter refuses to give it, or if he consents to sell the animal at market he gives his master but one-tenth of the cowries paid by the buyer. Nowadays, as a rule, the bagaré only "go along" when their master's debts are involved, and yet some of them run away with their belongings rather than pay those debts.

Let us also add that these slaves, who were mostly of Gourounsi or Boussansé origin, now want to return to their own land, and there is a continuous exodus, slow but sure, of Mossi slaves toward the south. Since the French have strictly forbidden the purchase and sale of slaves, on the other hand, the sources of supply have dried out. All this makes it clear why among the Mossi, as incidentally throughout West Africa, we are progressing toward a slow but certain suppression of slavery and serfdom.

In closing, let us say that among the Mossi blacksmiths who live in /special/ quarters or villages and whom we have already mentioned with regard to their patriarchal and nondecommunalized family type, we find true slaves of the common familial type such as we have described up to now, rather than serfs like the bagaré.

These slaves live in the same soukala as their master, whether married or unmarried, trade or house slaves. During the winter season, they all work on the fields of the soukala head from six in the morning to three in the afternoon, with the usual luncheon break. They have small individual plots, which they may work after three o'clock. During /567/ the dry season, they work all day at the blacksmith's trade with their master.

They are provided with food throughout the year by the head of the soukala, but they procure their own clothing, jewelry, grigri, etc. The soukala head buys the first wife for them and disposes of their daughters in return.

The estate of a deceased slave goes to his master and to his sons. As far as livestock and cowries are concerned, the master takes half and gives half to the son or sons. As for clothing, bracelets, etc., everything goes to the children. The latter share equally the part of their father's estate that devolves to them.

We can see that just as the family type of Mossi blacksmiths bears witness to an older state of affairs, the status of slaves among them also bears witness to the ancient local conditions prior to

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he received from them. This unequal exchange, plus the nobles' prerogative of seizing the wives of pagans, contributed to the increase of the Moslems.

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The conversion of Mossi to Islam is sometimes accompanied by a rupture in the relationships between persons involved in "friendships" with a view of obtaining wives. A great quarrel developed in the district between a pagan chief and a recent convert who refused to give the chief a daughter promised as a wife. The chief became furious and claimed that the Moslem had broken a promise made years ago, but the Moslem claimed that it was against his new religion to give his daughter to a pagan. It is not true that Moslems in the village do not exchange wives with pagans, but the Moslems often try to convert their pagan friends so that the brides will not have to revert to paganism. The chief's difficulty was that he could not become a Moslem because of his ritual and ceremonial relationship with the ancestors. The Moslem men do not have such difficulties with their pagan wives because most women follow their husbands' dictates in religious and other matters. Many Moslem men attempt to prevent their wives from having sacrifices made to the ancestors, but if a woman really wishes such a sacrifice she can easily have it arranged through her pagan relatives. If a woman married to a Moslem refuses to observe Islamic practices, she is liable to divorce and runs the risk of having her children taken away.

[562] [593] [586]

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Mossi anxiety over children is often instrumental in converting them to Islam. When a woman is barren or her young children die, she consults a soothsayer (*barga*). She is either told that her Tengkougre benefactor was not amply rewarded and recalled the children, or that her "Moslem" children (children who wished to be Moslems) were angry because they were given pagan names. In the latter case she is advised to make a gift to a Moslem and to ask her husband to build a Moslem prayer-circle outside his hut so that when her children "return" (are born again) they will see it. Finally, she is advised to give all her children Moslem names. I could discover no reason why the pagan soothsayers advise these anxious parents to adopt Islam, except that they hope that complicated prescriptions will be more efficacious. Nevertheless, so effective is this technique for gaining converts to Islam that even members of the family of the chief pagan priest are not immune to it. Furthermore, once a woman has a Moslem child, all her other children must be Moslems or they will die. A man whose children are all Moslem has no recourse except to adopt Islam if he wants a funeral, because his Moslem sons may not give him a pagan funeral.

[787] [551] [764]

797 167 ● [764]

Every Mossi, whether Moslem or non-Moslem, wishes a proper funeral, and now that travel has increased the fact of being Moslem or pagan is of great importance. Many young migrants to Ashanti have reported that their dead pagan comrades were unceremoniously disposed of, while the local Christians and Moslems took care of their dead coreligionists. But despite this fact, and the belief of administrators and missionaries, I found no evidence that the seasonal and other migration of Mossi youth to Ghana and the Ivory Coast have contributed very much to the spread of Islam. It is true that some of the thou-

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sands of Mossi who fled their homeland to escape forced labor or military service ultimately returned as Moslems, but the majority of seasonal migrants do not have enough contact with foreign populations for them to become Moslems. Most of the Mossi who migrate to Ghana work on cocoa farms far removed from large centers of population. It is also true that even those Mossi who worked for Moslems on the farms and found it expedient to "pray" (as the Mossi refer to conversion to Islam) soon reverted to paganism on their return in order to escape the displeasure of their lineage members. I have recorded several cases of pagans who became Moslems only when they returned from abroad to find their relatives all converted to Islam.

Today there are obvious rewards for those Mossi who embrace Islam; besides such tangible rewards as getting wives and children, there are the intangible ones of upward social mobility and greater prestige. It is important to note that most liberated slaves and serfs are now Moslems. Formerly these non-Mossi had low status, but today those who have been to Mecca bear such proud titles as *Hadji*. On the night before Ramadan, one of these men gave a talk before the Nobéré chief during which he chided the chief for his impiety and voiced the hope that the next chief would be a true Moslem. He admitted that the chief might interpret such a speech from a former serf as impertinence, but he begged him to accept the censure as coming from the servant of *Nabiyama* (the prophet). This same man had refused to pay homage to the chief at the annual sacrifice to the ancestors, and when admonished returned the daughter which the chief had given him as a wife. In earlier days a chief would not have given a daughter to a serf, and moreover, a disrespectful serf could be killed instantly.

Many French administrators and Christian missionaries allege that Mossi youth embrace Islam because they like the beautiful robes and red fezzes of the Moslems, but this is a naive explanation for the conduct of a highly sophisticated people. Most young men in Nobéré wear Moslem-type clothes because such clothes are the mode. Now that sun helmets, dark glasses, and women's raincoats with hoods are in vogue, pagans as well as Moslems wear them. What is of interest, however, is that when pagans become Moslems they wear cleaner clothes and affect a different style of life.

The local consensus is that Moslems are much better behaved than pagans because they do not swear, fight, or get drunk in public. The man chosen as Imam is required to have such characteristics as mercy toward evil-doers, benevolence, magnanimity, physical beauty, and virility. Yet many Mossi say that the Moslems can be worse than any other people. They accuse them of being charlatans, of selling Koranic verses as charms, and of committing murder by the use of magical formulae. Neither pagans nor Moslems believe that a man is necessarily good because he recites his daily prayers or goes to Mecca.

Moslems in the district follow most precepts of their religion: they recite the five daily prayers according to the rites of Tidjani (there are only two Moslems of the Hamada sect in the district and no members of the Hamallist sect), give alms to the poor, observe the month-long fast (called by the Mossi the

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known, however, whether this woman was Biligo's daughter or one of his pughsiudse. The people of Passintenga claimed descent from Biligo's daughter, but the other groups in the district questioned this ancestry. The village called Bourougna had two chiefs. One, the Tang Naba, was descended from a son of a Ouidi Naba of Ouagadougou who had settled in Nobere; the other, the Yang Naba, claimed descent from an aboriginal Ninisi man and woman of Biligo's lineage. The Yang Naba was thus another of Biligo's yagense in the district. The chief of Nimpwe village was a descendant of the aboriginal Ninisi people and was the principal Tengsoba in the district. He had more ritual power than political power, however. The nam of Basbedo village was held by a man descended from Busansi refugees. Living in this village was a man with the honorific title of Soulougre Naba, who claimed descent from the most important Ninisi family who had lived in the district prior to the arrival of Biligo.

Most of the nobles of the local ruling lineage lived either in the saghse of the district villages or in isolated hamlets. Local tradition holds that one of the conditions set by Naba Ngado for allowing Biligo's descendants to remain as village chiefs was the right to settle nineteen of his sons in many of the villages. He allegedly sent *mabissi* (sons of the same mother) to the same village. By so doing, he took advantage of the normal lines of fission that are created after the death of a Mossi father and prevented undue rivalries. Yet there was no driving necessity for him to do so, because there were more villages than chief's sons available. In fact, there are still many villages without nobles in Nobere district. The people of Passintenga, for instance, allegedly refused to have nobles live among them, while the people of Nimpwe allegedly killed by sorcery all the nobles who ever tried to live there. The actual reason for the absence of nobles in these villages may have been that the district chief did not wish to send his sons to villages into which his daughters had married or where there lived earth priests who were thought to be powerful sorcerers. Nobles were often unwelcome, feared, and resisted, because they tended to exploit the village people and to take advantage of the commoners.

The villages of Nobere district, like those of other Mossi districts, were populated in part by refugees and strangers. Several saghse in Togese village were inhabited by Mossi refugees who had fled a district called Guiergo after a fight over the nam of that district. Scattered throughout the district's villages were people of unknown origin called Siamse. The Siamse found in the villages of Tewaka and Nabadogo claimed that their ancestors had "followed" Naba Biligo when he came down from Ouagadougou to found the district. Several saghse in Bourougna village were in-

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habited by Yarse, people of Mandingo origin who had been assimilated by the Mossi. There were no Fulani in Nobere, even though some lived in nearby districts. But in Pinse village there lived people called Simili-Mossi, who claimed descent from Fulani herdsmen and Mossi women. Basbedo village was inhabited and ruled by people of Busansi origin. They claimed that their ancestors had fled from famine and other hardships in Busansi country and had been granted haven by Naba Biligo. The people who lived in the two saghse of Nab'tenga called Dapore (Dapobi) and Baglere (Bangare) were serfs of diverse non-Mossi origin. Saghse or compounds of Gurunsi slaves were found close to the dwellings of nobles and village chiefs throughout the district.

The number of saghse in the villages of Nobere district varied according to the size of the village and the pattern of nam inheritance within the major lineage segment that ruled the village. The saka itself housed a minor-lineage segment. The larger the village's minor lineage segment and the greater this group's genealogical depth, the more numerous were its component segments and thus its saghse. The proliferation of saghse and minor-lineage segments within the ruling lineage of a village was dependent primarily on possession of the nam. As soon as a man received the nam, he obtained control over a large amount of goods and services. He was then in a position to obtain many wives for himself and his immediate relatives, and as a result his minimal lineage grew rapidly. In time this group became so large that it split from its brother babissi within the saka, and formed a new saka of its own. Finally, this babissi became a minor lineage in its own saka, in segmental opposition to the other babissi and minor lineages within the other saghse. If the descendants of one man retained the nam for about three generations, their lineage segment and saka grew larger and in time cast off its own junior segments. However, if the segment lost the nam to a man of another babissi and saka, it ceased to proliferate. Some such groups even declined and disappeared by fusing with other local segments of the same lineage. Here is how the system worked in Barkago village of Nobere district.

Barkago itself was founded sometime in the dim past by a son of Naba Biligo. It had an area of eight or ten square miles and a population of about 650 when the French arrived in 1896. Its boundaries were set by such natural phenomena as clumps of trees, hills, and ravines. The village itself included five distinct saghse separated by footpaths, hills, rocks, and ravines, and an area of wasteland (*weogho*). Three of the saghse, Natenga ("chief's land"), Godin, and Kedpalago, were inhabited by the minor segments of the boodoo of Naba Biligo. Here is how this came about. After

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For example, the villagers of Barkago traditionally cultivated and harvested a field of millet behind his compound for the chief. The people of Pinse, Donse, Passingtenga, and Tewarka cultivated millet for him in their own villages, and those of Togose and Basbedo cultivated rice for him in their excellent lowlands.

The district chief had fields both behind his compound and in the bush, which were cultivated for him by his retainers, serfs, and slaves. More than the Mogho Naba and the provincial ministers, the district chief believed that a Moaga must perform agricultural work during the planting season; to show his interest in farming, he often personally supervised the work on his plantations. When the task of weeding or harvesting proved too much for his own people, he asked his villages for a *sosogha*. On that day, each village chief, accompanied by his men, went to the district chief's fields, where, to the accompaniment of drums and chants and with the verbal encouragement of district administrators, the villages vied with each other in their task. The district chief usually sat under a tree and watched the proceedings and occasionally visited the various contingents to observe the progress made. Toward evening, the chief's wives gave the workers large quantities of food and drink in compensation for their services.

Like the Mogho Naba, the district chief had officials who collected taxes on commodities sold in local markets. These district market officials were usually serfs, Gurunsi captives, or bondsmen from other populations. Mossi rarely served in such capacities because many of the local market places were considered ritually dangerous, and their titular deities, the Tengkouga, were believed to wreak vengeance on market officials who were tardy with sacrifices. The local Kos Naba supervised the slaughtering of every animal killed in the market, kept its skin so that its ownership could be verified if necessary, and collected taxes from the butchers in the form of meat or cowries. The Raga Naba of the district was not as strict as his counterpart in Ouagadougou, and seldom imposed formal taxes on the traders. He usually walked around the market, trailed by the chief's servants, and seized calabashes of grain and other commodities, which he placed in the servants' baskets. The Raga Naba did not tax those itinerant traders or caravaneers who visited the markets in the district, nor did he interfere with them in any other way. These merchants usually had business and personal relations with the chief, and he himself handled revenue from this source. The merchants gave him goods from the forest and Sahara regions, and he in turn often gave them wives, who were thus taken out of the district.

The Mossi district chief was always on the lookout for new sources of revenue, and thus welcomed strangers into his district because they "in-

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creased his force" and ultimately added to his income. Men who had been compelled to flee from other districts because of crimes or power struggles were granted refuge and given pughsiudse. In this manner, the district chief, like the Mogho Naba, established seignorial rights over his new subjects, incorporated them into the district, and obtained goods and services from them. The better a district chief's reputation, the greater the number of refugees who sought shelter with him and added to his wealth. Conversely, a chief who was known for his injustice, his rascality, and his excessive demands from persons seeking the village nam was shunned by potential subjects and might even be deserted by his own.

Those persons who visited the district chief's compound to settle court cases also contributed to his revenue. When the case dealt with cattle or other livestock, the chief received a few animals. In other cases, he received only the customary gifts from the litigants. He also received gifts from all the families in his district several times a year. One occasion was the "Tense," a festival in honor of the mother of Mogho Naba Oubri, the founder of the Ouagadougou dynasty; the other was the Basgha. During these two ceremonies every village chief, preceded by his district administrator and followed by his subjects, paid homage to the district chief and gave him presents. The district chief retained part of what he received for the upkeep of his household and to fulfill such obligations as hospitality to travelers, and added the remainder to his own annual tribute to the Mogho Naba.

The manner in which the district chief collected his annual tax or tribute for the Mogho Naba is the subject of controversy. Several of my respondents declared that the collection of this tribute was rather informal. The district chief allegedly notified the village chiefs that he wished to give a present to the Mogho Naba, and these chiefs sent word to the family heads, who, in turn, notified every household. The village people then collected chickens and livestock, baskets of grain, and cowries, and sent them up through the hierarchy to the district chief. The district chief's retainers checked the gifts from each village very carefully, and if some villages gave less than was expected of them, the district chief summoned their chiefs for explanations. In most cases the district chief knew exactly how much could be expected of his subjects, because his informers—usually his own pages and courtyard servants, or messengers of the local administrators—kept him informed of the wealth of each hamlet. Usually, a village chief who had withheld too much from the commodities turned over to him, or who had not demanded sufficient goods from his villagers, sought to make amends. It was in his interest to do so, since it was always dangerous to incur the

spirits. The chiefs could not refuse such requests, especially when the villagers were poor, because they were regarded as "fathers of their people." In some cases, however, district chiefs had to protect their subjects against unscrupulous Tengsobadamba who took advantage of local crises and tried to prey upon the villagers by refusing to perform the requisite sacrifices unless they received substantial gifts. The ensuing struggle was between the secular and the sacred; between the chief as a representative of the conquerors, and the Tengsoba as a member of the conquered group. It was always resolved in favor of the Mossi chief, who never permitted his Tengsobadamba the same privileges held by religious practitioners in neighboring societies.[9] The Mossi chiefs recognized that they needed the Tengsobadamba, and many myths recount how invading Mossi chiefs went into the woods where the Tengsobadamba were hiding to beseech and eventually force them to return to their districts so that sacrifices might be continued. On the other hand, the Mossi chiefs always insisted on the primacy of the nam over any other power. They employed the Tengsobadamba to intercede with Tenga for the welfare of their subjects, but they never allowed the priests to control them.

The coming of Moslems to the kingdom of Ouagadougou had little effect on the way in which the Mogho Nanamse used the traditional religious system to bolster their political power.[10] In fact, the Mossi rulers later used Islam and its adherents in the same manner as they had used the aboriginal religion. The Moslems first tried to subdue the Mossi in the fifteenth century by persuasion, and later by the jihad. Both attempts failed, but the Moslems finally entered Mossi country as refugees from Sudanese wars. Their fortunes waxed and waned, depending on whether they were befriended by the ruler in whose territory they lived. During certain periods, they were subjected to many restrictions and were forbidden by the Mogho Naba to recite their prayers in public places.[11] At other times, they were left free to practice their religion, and even succeeded in converting several Mogho Nanamse to Islam. Under converts such as Savadogo (ca. 1760), Islam spread into many districts and gave rise to such important local centers as Sakhaboutenga (Dakay).

The Moslems in Ouagadougou were represented at the court by their Imam. This person even received his badge of office—a white turban and white robe—from the Mogho Naba, and had to swear in the name of Allah and *Nabiyama* (the prophet Mohammed) to be faithful to him, obey him, and aid him in times of need. However, he did not have to drink the namtibo as suggested by Dim Delobson; nor did he have to observe such non-Moslem customs as drinking the millet beer the Mogho Naba provided for

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the status of women. They maintained that the French had conquered the Mossi men, not the women, and that the administration should not interfere with the way in which a Moaga treated his wife. Ironically enough, there was little the administration could do for the Mossi women, since the latter were too timid to approach the Europeans. Most of them continued to react to maltreatment from their husbands by running away, but now they went to the Gold Coast with labor migrants instead of returning to their lineage.

Although the Mossi chiefs had little autonomy in the administration of their subjects, and had to look to the administration for guidance in nearly everything they did, they were not completely powerless. They were the representatives of the colonial administration on the local level, and as such they could control their subjects through the differential allocation of prestations. Those Mossi who had maintained the traditional respect for the chiefs could look forward to less arduous tasks for the administration and to the avoidance of forced labor or army recruitment. Those who by their actions or attitude indicated that they had lost respect for the chiefs were penalized accordingly. Chiefs were also able to retain some control over their subjects because they were still the centers of social, economic, and political relations within their territories. They still received homage and presents from their more loyal or traditionalistic subjects, and with these goods and services they could bind other persons to themselves. Clever chiefs were able to manipulate the colonial administration and use it to enhance their traditional position so successfully that the administration and the missionaries had to take these men into account whenever they wished to establish contact with the population.

The desire of the missionaries to establish missions and schools for the purpose of converting the Mossi to Christianity presented the chiefs with a great challenge because, unlike the administration, the missionaries tried to establish direct contact with the people. The chiefs not only did not like to have Europeans living in their midst, but feared that they would lose control over their subjects who went to live near the missions. However, the chiefs could not refuse to grant the missionaries land on which to build missions and schools. They also provided labor for them, just as they did for the construction of administrative buildings and roads. Similarly, the chiefs recruited children for the mission schools in the same spirit as they recruited students for the schools of the administration. The difference between the Catholic missionaries and the administration with respect to education was that while the former were interested in educating the children of chiefs, they were also interested in children from other backgrounds. Nevertheless, the majority of chiefs continued to send to school

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their younger sons to become Moslems, and soon abandoned their active resistance to Islam.

Hesling did not permit the Mossi chiefs to revive their traditional religio-political rituals and ceremonies such as the Tense, but he continued to tolerate the Basgha. The French banned the Mossi market chiefs, because they believed (with some justification) that these officials used their offices to procure revenue for the chiefs. The difficulty was that the market chiefs were also responsible for arranging sacrifices to the market deities, which in the absence of such sacrifices would not protect the people from quarrels and violence in the market place. Some chiefs covertly retained their market chiefs; others obeyed the administration and remained anxious over the behavior of their subjects in the market. In general, however, most Mossi chiefs tried to adjust to the religious changes that were taking place, and sought to maintain at least surface amicability with all religious groups. Commenting upon the behavior of the Mogho Naba in this regard, Dim Delobson states:

> The Mogho Naba, above all, is a believer in animism like all his subjects, and it is hard to understand how he manages to reconcile his fetishism with the complex dogmas of Islam and with the many interdictions of Christianity. However, the Mogho Naba is quite capable of being a Catholic or a Moslem on appropriate occasions, while at the same time respecting the traditions of his ancestors. Thus, when the Christians are celebrating Christmas, the emperor of the Mossi devoutly attends midnight Mass. Nevertheless, he wears his fez [really the bonnet which is the symbol of his office], just as the bishop wears his miter. He likewise embraces Islam for the three Moslem festivals.[47]

Hesling failed in his attempt to develop the Upper Volta as a viable colony, and many of the chiefs whom he had used as his auxiliaries lost not only a great deal of power but also a great deal of prestige in the eyes of their subjects because of the role they had played vis-à-vis the administration. By 1929 the economy of the Upper Volta was in poor condition: cotton production had declined; taxes (raised from 5,800,000 francs in 1921 to 18,274,000 francs in 1927 and scheduled to be raised to 26,400,000 francs in 1930) were unbearable; many of the roads that were too extensive, too little used, and too difficult to maintain had been abandoned; and more than 46,000 laborers who had worked in the cotton fields and on the roads had fled to the neighboring Gold Coast.[48] The Colonial Minister, Sarraut, ordered that the colony of the Upper Volta be dismembered. He states in his decree of September 1932 that the suppression of the Upper Volta "would permit appreciable savings, and would make the adminis-

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official, M. Louveau, to relieve the Mossi of excessive prestations and taxation. Louveau cut taxes from 33,000,000 to 24,000,000 francs, a decision which, according to Burthe d'Annelet,

> forward-looking as it was, represented only an amelioration of the past situation. In effect, the natives had exhausted all their reserves, sold their animals dirt cheap, and could not pay their taxes in an honest manner. This represents quite clearly an abuse of taxation. One must conclude from these facts that taxes had been raised too rapidly, and that these excesses had long surpassed the resources of the natives, even though it is the present depression that brings this out.[52]

The administration continued to require the Mossi chiefs to supply laborers, but found that many potential workers were leaving for the Gold Coast instead.

Despite the fact that Abidjan, the capital of the Ivory Coast, is far removed from Mossi country, the administration of the Ivory Coast hesitated at first to maintain an administrative center in Ouagadougou or to return to the Mossi chiefs any of their lost authority for administrative purposes. The situation had become so chaotic by the mid-1930's that Pierre Boisson, the Governor-General of French West Africa, issued a decree making the Ouagadougou region part of an administrative unit called the Upper Ivory Coast. He says:

> In acting thus we wish, on the one hand, to facilitate relations between the Upper and Lower Ivory Coast, and, on the other hand, to ensure for the Mossi population an effective representation of their particular interests, which do not always coincide with those of their neighbors. It also seems to us that in order to ensure this simultaneous liaison and separation, the Governor of the Ivory Coast ought to be seconded by a delegate in Mossi country who would be responsible for coordinating the local interests of [the Mossi] with the general interests of the colony.[53]

Boisson was under increasing pressure from such officials as Delavignette and Labouret to improve the administration of his territories, but when World War II broke out all plans for reform had to be shelved.[54]

The Mossi chiefs, especially the Mogho Naba, swiftly came to the support of France in her hour of need, and several thousand Mossi and other Voltaics were sent to the lines as soon as war broke out. According to Balima:

> In 1940, the old and popular Mogho Naba Kom II, shocked by the spectacle of the French disaster, . . . took his two eldest sons by the hand and declared to the Mossi people in the presence of General Barraud, senior commander of the troops: "Here are my two sons, my eldest sons, to fight for France." Soon afterward this French general was able to recruit more than

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175 366 437 54 their own commercial centers, they acted quite differently outside their country. Dubois reports that at Timbuktu, "the great town of pleasure" with the freest morals in the Sudan, the merchants from Bamako, Djenne, Sansanding and Touat spent a great deal of money in pleasure and in gifts to the beautiful women, but the "Mossi did not waste their money and left as soon as they had finished their affairs" (Dubois 1899 : 292–300).

175 437 439 648 The days of the caravans are now over in Mossi country, even though large groups of traders carry on the traditional commerce in livestock, cotton, kola nuts, some dried fish, and salt. As soon as the French conquered th country they formulated plants to control the caravans. One of the earliest reports, for June 1899, reads:

> The country is calm and direct administration was established at Koupela, Mane, Yake . . . The Mossi trade is mainly with the English colony of the Gold Coast. It consists mainly of livestock, very plentiful in Mossi country, which is exchanged for merchandise from England; copper and material goods . . . Our task will be to discover the materials of the northern Ivory Coast which could be exchanged for cattle, and when this information is forthcoming we should be able to direct the caravans quite easily to the Ivory Coast. At the same time the English will see their provisions of cattle and sheep diminish. They will flood us less with their cotton cloth, with their glass beads, and with their kola nuts. In their place, the products of French manufacture can arrive to us through the Ivory Coast after being exchanged for the products of our colony there.[8]

439 167 464 These plans did not succeed. The Mossi still export a great deal of their products towards the forest zones of Ghana, including their "numerous laborers" which, according to Beauminy writing in 1919, were "the principal riches actually utilizable in Mossi country". (Beauminy 1919 : 71–78). The migrants themselves are, in a sense, the greatest traders in contemporary Mossi society.

PRESENT-DAY TRADE

439 [441] [472] [178] [113] There is a constant flow of goods between Mossi country and the Ivory Coast and Ghana. Much of the trade to the former region is in the hands of the large commercial companies and as such is beyond the purview of this paper. What is of interest here is the trade which is conducted by the ordinary people. A great deal of this trade is highly unorganized and the result of one or two men, or as many as five men, joining together to trade goods to and from Ghana and the Ivory Coast. The types of goods sent down to these two areas are the same as those traded in pre-European times.

(8) Unpublished document in the archives of *Institut Français d'Afrique Noire*, Wagadougou, Voltaic Republic.

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439 complained to the district chief. Unfortunately for them the district
648 chief was absent, but his assistants did send out a call for the village chief. However, the chief refused to appear, saying that he would only do so when the district chief returned. The last thing I saw was the agents leaving the district chief's compound still unsatisfied with the whole affair." The sequel to this comes from my notes for December 26, 1955. "I inquired about the aftermath of the contraband case and was told that the whole affair is being referred to the courts at Abidjan. If the village chief is found guilty, he will have to pay a fine of 10,000 francs for the first ass and 3,000 francs for each subsequent ass, or in lieu of this go to jail. Informant said that since the village chief is a poor man, he would probably go to jail."

439 In spite of the contraband, the actual volume of trade appears to
433 be considerable. The production, trade and export of goods largely produced by the Mossi people in 1954 are set forth in Table 29.

TABLE 29

Production, Trade and Export of the Mossi (1954)

Product	*Amount*	*Export*	*Destination*
Almonds	35,000 tons	5,602	France and African countries
Peanuts	50,000 tons	3,031	France and African countries
Cattle	1,560,000 tons	101,000	Ghana, Togo and Ivory Coast
Sheep and Goats	2,115,000 tons	238,255	Ghana, Togo and Ivory Coast

439 These figures do not include the numerous items that drift over
167 the frontiers of Ghana and the Ivory Coast with the thousands of
464 migrants who go to these places each year. While the actual number of such migrants is difficult to ascertain, Pierre Dufour believes that it is "about 150,000 men per year, of whom 100,000 go to the Gold Coast and 50,000 to the Ivory Coast". (Dufour 1956 : 3). And since almost every one of these migrants takes with him some trade item such as a chicken or two, a small sheep or goat, a small sack of cereal or other vegetable produce or a few bands of cotton to defray part of his transportation costs, the amount of goods actually exported is
439 considerable. These statistics rarely enter into the account of goods
167 exported from Mossi country, since custom officers do not usually tax
464 migrants for small items, and do not make any record of them. Of
648 course, when the migrants carry large loads, these are recorded and the migrants must pay export taxes.

Greater attention is paid to the goods which those migrants who work in Ghana (but not in the Ivory Coast) bring back with them after one season or after several years of work, since the government of the Voltaic Republic derives a great deal of its tax revenue from duties on these goods.

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The migrants bring back all types of goods with them. According to Dufour: "Money as such is not brought back in very large proportion because manufactured products of the English colony (Gold Coast) cost less. Consequently, each year there is a great introduction of bicycles, sewing machines, fabrics". (Dufour 1956 : 140). One might add to this list kerosene lamps, zinc buckets, all types of wearing apparel, and all manner of household goods. An inventory of the common trunk of two returning migrants revealed the following merchandise: two kerosene lamps, two bottles of kerosene, two burnoose of black serge trimmed with pink silk, one white burnoose, two blue shirts, two khaki shorts, two tubes of Thermogene (a medicated rub), eight women's headkerchiefs, two Moslem fezes, two hand mirrors, two jars of Vaseline petroleum jelly, two pairs of sandals, one black scarf, packs of camphor balls, and one bottle of perfume. These goods represent the migrant's work over one season, from October to the following April, in the cacao fields of Ghana. Other migrants return with more, but few return with less. The actual value of these goods has been estimated by Dufour at about one billion francs C.F.A. per year. The custom duties which the migrants pay amount to more than 150 million francs C.F.A. annually—the sum they actually paid into the treasury of the Haute Volta in 1953 (Rouch 1956 : 139 ff.).

The migrants distribute to their relatives a good part of the goods they bring back, but a large proportion gets into the hands of other people either through the market or through more direct channels. Here is an example taken from my notes of March 24, 1956: "*Trading in bicycles:* Moussa gave Souliman a cow and an old bicycle for a new bicycle which Souliman had bought for 5,000 francs from a passing migrant. Souliman was trying to sell this same cycle for 6,250 francs, thus trying to make a profit of 1,250 francs just two or three days after he had bought it . . . Souliman slaughtered the cow which he received from Moussa and sold the beef to the local *restaurateur* at an additional profit. Souliman appears to be a sharp individual. He recently bought another bicycle for 5,000 francs from a migrant and resold it for 7,500 francs." This type of trading is not unusual, but the most typical articles resold by migrants in the local markets are lamps, worn shirts, shoes and other articles of clothing.

The growth of migration among Mossi men has led to a new type of commercial activity in the country. This is the selling of cooked food by the women to passing migrants. These women and young girls prepare food such as chicken, rice, millet balls, millet flour water and fried cakes which they bring to the principal thoroughfares to sell. Many of them arrive at the central village areas as early as four

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What this really means is that the market is the main communication center of Mossi society and news of happenings in the region can be heard there. If a person is in an area one can be sure that the people in the market will know about him, or that he will sooner or later visit the market.

The young men who have returned from work in the cacao fields or towns of Ghana and the Ivory Coast add a great deal of color and excitement to the rural markets of contemporary Mossi country. During the time these young men spend away, they give a great deal of thought and planning to the show they hope to put on when they make the grand tour *(mane do)* of their district's market place. The best day for this is the day of the "great market" and regardles of what day many migrants return to their homes, they wait for that Friday before they show themselves publicly.

On the morning of that day, the typical migrant dresses in his best clothes, lends the remainder of his wardrobe to relatives, and together they go to pay homage to the chief during the morning ceremony *(Wend pous yan)*. The migrant offers the chief such presents as a small amount of money, an article of clothing or kola nuts, and replies to the chief's questions about the health and welfare of all Mossi in the area whence the migrant came, the whereabouts of "lost" migrants, the nature of the work the migrants were doing, and so on. As soon as the young man receives the chief's permission to leave, he goes to the market where he is quickly surrounded by *griots* who accompany him in periodic circumambulations of the market place, drumming and singing praises in honor of his ancestry. The migrant is also greeted warmly by his many friends to whom he then gives presents of money, beer and kola nuts. He acknowledges the general praise for having brought goods and clothing for his relatives and takes pride in seeing these relatives dressed in the cloths and clothing he has brought them. If young and unmarried, the migrant also seeks to take advantage of his new-found importance to make the first overtures to available young women or to renew his relationship with former paramours. Towards evening before going home, he rewards the *griots* with money and bear. Many a migrant attempts to prolong this feeling of grandeur by visiting other markets and by dressing up on subsequent grand market days, but after a few weeks he is re-incorporated into the ordinary market routine, and has to make room for the other newly-arrived migrants.

The market is also the place where important rites marking the changing social status of individuals are carried out. Under normal circumstances, the ceremonies attending the birth of a Mossi child are performed at home. When a woman has a number of stillbirths or

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market and set up their small tables to display all types of goods from trinkets to single lumps of sugar. And the more numerous young men, who have no goods but have money in their pockets, go to the leaf-covered sheds, place their weapons on top of them, and take seats from which to view the passing parade. Imperceptibly, the hum in the market increases as people find their places and greet one another with *Ne Raga*, the market greeting, until by 11:30 A.M. the whole market reverberates with sounds of drumming, cries of vendors, and the shrill voice of water hawkers and juvenile vendors. Now the market is in full swing.

From midday until about 3:30 P.M., the Mossi market is a sea of humanity—talking, laughing, arranging rendezvous, quarreling, selling, buying, parading, and (where youngsters are concerned) often crying for want of money to buy a desired object. The return of migrants lends additional color and excitement to the market as these young people walk about in their new clothes, encouraging the drummers to sing louder praises, the maidens to feel jealous of the clothes of the migrants' female relatives, the former migrants to reminisce about the days when they too had bright new clothes, and the young boys to dream of going off one day to obtain the things they need.

Men, noting that their female relatives are spending too much time looking over the wares of a vendor of European products or of the kola-nut seller, wander over ostensibly to help in the purchase but really to prevent love affairs. The failure to observe such a precaution may be the cause of the shouting a man hears in the distance, and off he hurries to see whether a lineage brother or a friend may need his aid. He may either get into the battle himself, or aid the Raga Naba and the other elders to chase the battlers out of the market place, or to take them to the chief. This may indeed restore some peace and good fellowship to the market.

Elders, now more interested in beer than in other pleasures, pass the heat of the market day under the beer sellers' shed. From time to time one of them may be interrupted by a young man bringing him three kola nuts, one or two of which are immediately broken and given to friends. However, when an oldster, whether a drinking pagan or a Moslem teetotaler, sees or overhears a young man buying four kolas, he may frown or smile in the knowledge that mischief is afoot. Loud-voiced predictions of the consequences of evil-doing may suddenly disturb the merrymakers as American missionaries speaking in perfect More (the language of the Mossi) appear and harangue the market people. Then, as suddenly, the *Americadamba* depart in their large cars, and the curious pagans, amused Catholics or hostile Moslems who had gathered to hear the gospel return to